

REMARKS

The undersigned attorney wishes to express his appreciation for courtesies extended by the Examiner during a telephone interview conducted on April 20, 2005. During the discussion the undersigned stated that it is desired of the Examiner to consider a proposed amendment which it is believed could favorably resolve the present application. The Examiner indicated that in view of the application being under final rejection, the proposal should be submitted by way of a Rule 116 Amendment, and accordingly this is the purpose of the present paper. It is submitted that such paper is therefore appropriate, and entry of the Amendment is respectfully requested.

Specifically, it will be noted that applicant has canceled claim 8 relating to the system disclosed in this application, and has carefully amended the remaining claim 9, which is a method claim. Applicant has fully considered the Examiner's cited Office Action and references, and believes that the remaining amended claim, *i.e.*, method claim 9, will now serve to fully and patentably distinguish the present invention from the prior art by emphasizing via the method recitations both the specific steps by which the inventive method is carried out, and as well the unique environment in which the steps are applied.

It will thus be seen that applicant has amended the second subparagraph of claim 9 to recite that the visitor to the bulletin board is "specifically aware of the identity of said person at the time of the visitor's application", and is "desiring by offering said gift to obtain the mail address of said person".

The present amendments and the cancellation of the system claim thus emphasize that this invention is uniquely concerned with a type of situation and environment that is simply not present or addressed in the references of record. In the present invention the recited steps of the method emphasize that the person listed on the bulletin board is one who is known in

advance by the visitor, and indeed as is discussed in the specification is in many instances a well-known personage such as a stage performer. In the present inventive method there is no element of anonymity. There is no conduct of communications either with an electronic system or with the person listed on the bulletin board in an environment where the identity of the listed person is intentionally kept from the visitor until some appropriate conditions are met. Rather the steps recite that the visitor is fully aware at all times of exactly who the listed person is, and is carrying out the method purely for the purpose of obtaining the mailing address for the known person by meeting the condition precedent of providing a gift to such a posted person. Once that gift is provided and confirmed the visitor is automatically provided the mailing address. Nothing further need be done to retrieve that.

It is respectfully submitted that this method is not taught by any of the references nor can it be discerned by combination of such references. The method cannot be discerned or suggested by the reference to Oshima for the simple reason that Oshima's context is utterly different, *i.e.*, it involves gifts to a wedding participant or the like, and in that context both the name and the address of the wedding participant are obviously known to the giftor. In the second reference relied upon, *i.e.*, Ewing, the entire basis for the system is to maintain anonymity unless and until the parties consent to identification. This is obviously a type of system directed at social interactions such as dating. Ewing therefore involves an utterly different context than the present invention, where the visitor is concerned with contacting one who is often a public figure such as an actor, politician or so forth, and one for whom anonymity is the furthest thing from his or her mind.

By focusing the single remaining claim on the method of the invention, it is believed that not only the steps of the invention, but also the context and environment in which the

invention is applied is increasingly emphasized; and accordingly it becomes much clearer that the prior art citations as just discussed could not individually or in any reasonably obvious combination yield the presently claimed method.

It is submitted in view of the instant amendments and of the foregoing remarks, that all objections to patentability have now been properly overcome; and it is accordingly respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered and favorable reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance provided.

Respectfully submitted,



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